countries through Indian missions in those countries that the various Export Promotion Schemes are not in the nature of subsidies.

Free Import of Oilseeds

1564. SHRI E. BALANANDAN:

SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the Address made my noted ecologist, Dr. Vandana Shiva in a Press Conference that Government's decision to free import of oilseeds especially soyabeans on one hand and banning the sale of mustard oil on the other, was not coincidental;

(b) whether the only visible beneficiary of the tragedy has been the International Soyabean Lobby who are using the market opening to push its genetically engineered stock into the Indian market; and

(c) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE): (a) Import of soyabean in split and cracked form, sunflower and rapeseed have been permitted for import subject to plant quarantine conditions in order to enhance the availability of edible oil in the domestic market, increase capacity utilisation of processing mills and generate additional exports of oilmeals. The ban on sale of mustard oil was on account of adulteration in the mustard oil.

(b) and (c) Consignments not meeting the plant quarantine conditions and other human, animal and plant safety norms would be appropriately dealt with by the authorities through measures including but not limited to, denial of entry at the port of disembarkment and/or reshipment. The Government has also issued orders for compulsory packaging of Edible oils. The actual import of oilseeds would depend not only on the domestic availability but also on the availability and prices prevailing in the international markets.

Plan for Promotion of Farm Exports

1565. DR. MOHAN BABU : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have drawn up a comprehensive plan for promotion of farm exports;

(b) if so, the details thereof and how best the plan would help in increasing India's present poor share in world trade; and

(c) the extent to which the comprehensive plan would boost country's foreign exchange earnings?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEDGE): (a) and (b) Policy of exports of agricultural products forms an integral part of the Export Import Policy of the country. The Policy regarding exports of agricultural products is governed principally by the concern of India's food security, maximising farm incomes and earning foreign exchange. Review of export performance of agricultural products is an on-going process and accordingly policy interventions are made, as and when considered necessary with a view to making agricultural exports increasingly viable.

Some of the steps taken/proposed to be taken to enhance exports of farm goods include:

1. Providing assistance for raising small and large nurseries for production of good quality planting material, upgradation of technical know how of farmers through demonstrations, trainings and publicity, rejuvenation of old orchards, area expansion, supply of minikits for vegetables, improving productivity and training of farmers.